

The Eagle's Eye

125th Fighter Wing, Florida Air National Guard



Fall 2004
Volume 4, Issue 3

HURRICANE SEASON 2004

125th helps those in need overcome nature's worst



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Cover: A satellite view of Hurricane Frances days before the storm made landfall. (NASA Photo)

Back Cover: An Air Force F-16 lies in a crumpled heap at Homestead AFB, Fla. The aircraft was broken and could not be repaired and flown before Hurricane Andrew made landfall, August 1992. The F-16 was stored an alert bay capable of withstanding 150 MPH winds. Andrew exceeded the alert bay's tolerance level."



9



10



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Commander's Column

By Col. James A. Firth
125th Fighter Wing Commander

This is my last opportunity as Commander to address the men and women of the 125th in The Eagle's Eye. I have several thoughts I would like to leave with each of you, including some reflections about where we've been, and where we're going.

First, on behalf of the Florida National Guard, as well as the citizens of Florida, I want to thank everyone in the 125th for the simply superb dedication and performance during the recent hurricanes. The unprecedented, cumulative effects of four consecutive major hurricanes impacting Florida, created a situation requiring an "all-out" effort by the entire Florida National Guard and numerous state and federal agencies. Our state-wide mobilization, the scope of our relief efforts, and the devastation created by the storms produced an emergency "wartime" environment, in some ways like the climate immediately following the events of 9/11. Similar to the period following 9/11, the men and women of the 125th stepped up to the challenge in ways we can all be very proud of.

Together, we were part of the largest joint humanitarian relief operation ever performed by the Florida National Guard.

Virtually everyone in the 125th contributed to this effort, either as part of the over 400 individuals placed on State Active Duty orders directly supporting hurricane relief, the many individuals who were part

of mobilization processing for these personnel, or the remainder of the Wing, which found a way to continue performing our extremely challenging federal mission against tremendous odds, while also evacuating our aircraft from both Jacksonville and Homestead multiple times, and securing both bases, with a significant portion of our manpower essentially deployed for hurricane relief operations. Many of you were part of both groups, and many of you were also personally impacted by the effects of one or more of the storms.

Your service and performance throughout this period was



simply astounding. Together, your contributions to lessening the suffering of so many of our fellow citizens of Florida, and promoting the recovery from the effects of the hurricanes, will go down in history among the finest examples and traditions of the entire purpose and record of excellence of the National Guard. I know I speak for our Commander in Chief, Governor Bush, and our Adjutant General Major General Burnett, when I say that the entire state of Florida appreciates the many heroes who contributed so much—everyone who answered

the call to serve, many of those interrupting their own lives, jobs or education, working extremely long hours, or postponing their own personal storm repairs or clean-up, spending long, hard days away from home in primitive, challenging conditions.

While we all hope Florida will never again experience another series of hurricanes like the season of 2004, in today's environment, due to the situation we face in the ongoing global war on terrorism, and the possibility of either a terrorist event, or some other type of disaster within the United States, it is critical we are prepared to perform the Military Support to Civil Authority (MSCA) mission. We are working hard to ensure we incorporate lessons learned from this operation, which will make us better prepared to conduct MSCA operations in the future.

As I look back at the two years since I became Commander of the 125th, I would like to reflect on what we've accomplished as a unit. This period has been among the busiest, most challenging, and most productive in our history, and I think each of you should be extremely proud of your tremendous performance, and your contributions to our nation's defense.

In August 2002, as a Wing, we faced the unprecedented challenge of performing one of the nation's heaviest Noble Eagle alert taskings, while also providing extensive support for

more Geographically Separated Units (GSU's) than any Wing in the entire Air National Guard, in the most heavily mobilized state, operating in support of the global war on terror. The entire base, including Finance, Supply, Personnel, Communications, Contracting, Services, the Chaplain's office, Civil Engineering, Medical, Legal and Safety faced an unprecedented ops tempo, supporting FL ANG GSU's in their operations in the war on terror. At the same time, we were secretly preparing to deploy as the lead F-15 AEF unit, to a remote Saudi base for the start of combat operations to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq. While our senior military leaders eventually decided to cancel our deployment for reasons that included a need to deploy more attack and fighter-bomber aircraft to bases with extremely limited ramp space, we all know we were completely ready to go, and perform in an exceptional manner, if needed.

To help us prepare for this potential combat deployment, in September 2002, we deployed to Naval Air Station Key West for an extraordinary opportunity to conduct training operations against one of the premier



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michelle L. Thomas

Colonel Firth stopped by a distribution site in Stuart, Fla. last month and spoke with Staff Sgt. Dean Diana from the 125th Avionics Intermediate Shop. Guard members deployed to various locations for three of the four hurricanes that struck Florida recently.

threat aircraft our F-15s might face in combat, the MiG-29 Fulcrum. At the initiation of combat operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom, our alert tasking was increased again. Throughout the past two years, we have responded to numerous increases in alert taskings.

On three occasions we have initiated alert operations in Jacksonville, our Homestead

A l e r t
Detachment has been the most active alert site in the U.S., and we have performed literally hundreds of combat air patrols for Presidential visits, space shuttle launches, sporting events, etc.

After being notified we

for Operation Iraqi Freedom, rather than dwelling on disappointment, while still supporting the GSU's and performing our large Noble Eagle tasking, we deployed as a unit to support the USAF F-16 Weapons School curriculum at Nellis AFB, Nevada.

From before Thanksgiving 2003 through much of January 2004, on extremely short notice, we performed alert at Jacksonville in response to intelligence indicating an increased threat to the U.S. In March, we deployed as a unit for the most tactically demanding exercise we have ever participated in, Red Flag 04-2, involving over 2500 personnel from 20 different units, in complex night, large force operations (over 80 aircraft strike packages), using Fighter Data Link and Night Vision capabilities.

In spring through summer 2004, we sent unprecedented numbers of Expeditionary Combat Support (ECS) personnel to southwest Asia, to



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michelle L. Thomas

Colonel Firth helps a Stuart, Fla. resident load MRE's, water and ice after Hurricane Jeanne hit the small beachside community.

would not deploy to Saudi Arabia

support the war on terror, including civil engineering, security, contracting, medical, logistics, operations and communications personnel. At the same time, our C-26 personnel served as lead unit for a "rainbow" operation to a classified location, in our first OCONUS C-26 deployment ever, and the C-26 personnel who did not deploy served as lead unit for an eight unit C-26 operation here in Jacksonville to provide 24/7 surveillance for the G-8 summit, and we performed F-15 alert at Jacksonville to support the G-8 summit. During this period, we also prepared to deploy our own F-15s to Iceland for an Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) deployment in support of NATO.

Over the past several years, 125th members have deployed throughout Florida and the United States, to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Iceland, Colombia, Germany, Spain, Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Kuwait, Kyrgystan and Iraq. We were also recognized for great performance during numerous

inspections. In perhaps our most challenging period ever, we also found a way to demonstrate absolutely superb performance in a non-wartime, administratively-oriented inspection, the Unit Compliance Inspection, demonstrating an incredible 98% compliance! Both the C-26, and the Alert Detachment received "Outstanding" ratings on inspections. The entire 125th performed in an exceptional manner during the ESOH CAMP inspection, and the Medical Group received an "Excellent" rating in their Health Services Inspection. The entire 125FW's performance was reflected in the 159th Fighter Squadrons' recognition as the Air National Guard's top fighter squadron for 2003, and the Air National Guard's representative to compete for the U.S. Air Force's Raytheon Hughes Achievement Award.

On Nov. 7, Col Scott Stacy will become the 125th Fighter Wing Commander, and a number of other individuals will assume new positions within the Wing to form the next generation of

125th leadership. I ask each of you to continue to offer Col. Stacy and his team the incredible performance, dedication and support you have provided me. I believe Col Stacy and his team will be among the most capable and effective leadership teams the 125th has ever had. I also ask you to remember that while I don't expect our ops tempo to slow down appreciably in the near future, we must all remain focused. There has never been a time in American history in which the threats we face, and our need to succeed have been more evident.

Today, we are among the most capable F-15 wings, and one of the most respected units in the entire U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard. This is a reflection on every member of the 125th and the tremendous attitude, work ethic, commitment to excellence, and ability to put our best ideas together to work as a team.

It has been an honor to serve as your Commander over the past two years!

CHANGE OF COMMAND--

LT. Col. Thomas Cucchi accepts the squadron guidon from Col. James A. Firth during a Change of Command Ceremony here Saturday Oct. 2, ceremoniously assuming command of the 159th Fighter Squadron, formerly under the leadership of Lt. Col. Scott Studer (right).



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Lea-ann Steiner

Do OPSEC concepts apply during State Active Duty deployments?

*By Major Richard E. Bittner
125th Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

The recent onslaught of significantly hostile weather patterns in our home state of Florida (read: lots of hurricanes!) made our already busy lives, just that much busier.

Were we prepared to respond? You bet! Did four hurricanes in a row tax our resources and our personnel? Another resounding yes! Did our enemies know that we were stretched thin? They did if, while we were deployed throughout the state, we made small talk about our day to day mission in ear shot of the general public.

We were able to accomplish the state and federal missions simultaneously because of your outstanding work ethic, character and desire to "get 'er done" with respect to the mission of serving your fellow Floridians. May we never cease to have outstanding citizens like you;

willing to serve. As such, a huge majority of the people we helped this September are, and forever will be, our biggest fans. Just continue to keep in mind that our enemies were out there too, watching, listening and waiting for a vulnerable opportunity to strike.

Operations Security is a tool that our enemies believe in ... and one that we need to understand and integrate into our daily routine even when that routine is shaken by State Active Duty.

Our work is information, and not all of it is classified.

What we don't always realize is how much we are giving away by our casual conversations. We must be careful of what we are revealing - failure to do so could provide our enemies with the information they need to execute additional terrorist acts. Help keep us all a little safer by thinking before you speak!

125FW/ Det. 1 weapons specialist's bravery recognized by Miami police

The Miami-Dade Police Department recently commended Tech. Sgt. Steven L. Colgrove, 125FW, Det. 1 weapons specialist, and presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation for his act of bravery while aiding an officer in danger April 16, 2004.

On that date, Colgrove observed Officer Richard Wilkinson on the ground attempting to handcuff a subject, and he unhesitatingly rushed to his assistance. Colgrove immediately grabbed the subject's right arm and was able to secure the arm by holding it firmly.

The subject stopped struggling and Officer Wilkinson was able to handcuff the subject.

In the certificate the Department noted "Law enforcement has long realized that they cannot cope with the crime in our society without the aid of responsible citizens in the community. Only through concerned citizens like



Photo courtesy of 125FW/DET 1

Technical Sgt. Steven Colgrove (center) is presented a certificate of appreciation by Mr. Robert Parker, Director of the Miami-Dade Police Department May 31, 2004 for his heroic actions assisting an officer in need April 16, 2004, as his wife Kim looks on.

you are law enforcement agencies able to accomplish their mission in an efficient manner."

When duty calls...

By Lt. Col. Steven E. Thompson
125th Fighter Wing Chaplain

Every Florida Air National Guardsman has spent the past three years preparing to and engaging our nation's enemies in our Global War on Terrorism.

Many of you left your families, jobs and schools behind to deploy to places around the world that most Americans do not know exists and cannot correctly spell.

You helped draw lines in the sand and dared the enemies of freedom to cross.

As summer transitioned into fall we were called upon to look into the eyes of new enemies that threatened our state.

The "eyes" to which I am referring are those of Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne.

Whether the threat comes from the evil intentions of low life terrorist thugs or the ill winds of low pressure cells, our state and nation look to us for protection and help.

Our first minutemen stood ready with their rifles to defend their families and country.

Have you ever considered what was going through their minds while they waited to respond to the call to arms?

I cannot know for sure, but I doubt their thoughts were much different than yours.

One thing I do know for sure.

They did not think of themselves as heroes ... they were just patriots doing their job!



That is exactly what you are: a hero and a patriot doing a terrific job for your community, state and nation.

We are all a bit tired and anxious to get back to our "real" lives.

I imagine our first minutemen felt that very same way. However, their efforts were not unnoticed or wasted; neither was yours.

America is the greatest nation on earth because of God's blessings and because of the patriots of every generation, including each of you.

I had the privilege of serving during Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne with several Florida Army National Guard units led by the 927th Combat Logistics Battalion.

These ad-hoc task forces, comprised of both military and civilian leaders and workers, did an incredible job of getting much needed supplies to people greatly in need.

I can honestly say with pride and humility the folks in the communities where we served could not thank their Guardsmen enough.

In the New Testament the Apostle Paul commends the Christians in Macedonia for their great gift that was given out of their "abundance of joy and their deep poverty ... according to their ability and beyond their ability." (2 Corinthians 8:2-3)

Their generosity to those in need will never be forgotten.

The minutemen's sacrifices will never be forgotten.

And, your contributions to the safety and security of our country and the health and welfare of our communities will continue as a testimony to your competence and commitment.

God Bless You! Chaplain



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shelley Gill

First Lieutenant (Chaplain) Johnny Johns (left) is sworn in as a new Wing Chaplain. Senior Wing Chaplain, Lt. Col. Steven Thompson, officiated the small ceremony held here at the 125th Fighter Wing Chapel Aug. 28, 2004.

Sexual assault prevention and response report released

Tech. Sgt. David A. Jablonski
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON – The Air Force released a study Aug. 30 that assessed the service's sexual assault prevention and response capabilities.

In February 2004, the secretary of the Air Force and the Air Force chief of staff requested an assessment of sexual assault prevention and response capabilities, including areas in need of improvement. The Air Force performed a qualitative assessment that generated findings to inform senior leaders of potential program improvements. Michael L. Dominguez, assistant secretary of the Air Force for manpower and reserve affairs, and Lt. Gen. Roger A. Brady, deputy chief of staff for personnel, supervised the assessment.

"The most important thing we learned is that sexual assault is a very complex subject," General Brady said. "And it's a subject that we probably didn't understand very well. So this report helps us educate our commanders, our supervisors, our people, and ourselves so that we know what we're dealing with and we can attack the problem aggressively.

Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Michael T. Moseley, in a February tasking memorandum to all major command commanders, established five goals for the assessment:

- Strive to eliminate sexual assault and any environment that fosters it.
- Ensure an environment where victims have the confidence to report sexual assault.
- Conduct appropriate investigation and prosecution.
- Address victims' well being and health as effectively as possible.
- Ensure commanders and senior leaders oversee program effectiveness.

"We want to send a very clear message," General Brady said. "It is that sexual assault, or any behavior anywhere approaching this, is absolutely inconsistent with our core values and everything that we believe. It is unacceptable.

Twenty significant findings are listed in the report, as well as 14 recommendations. Findings and recommendations focused on six topic areas: sexual assault realities; policy and leadership; education and training; reporting; response; and air expeditionary forces and deployment. Each topic area except sexual assault realities contains a series of recommendations.

"We're already using what we have found," General Brady said. "We're developing programs that begin with Airmen coming to Lackland, officers coming in to various accession forces, noncommissioned officer academies, commander's schools, etc. We want to have consistent messages, appropriate to the audience, across the ranks. And we are educating our leaders to deal with these problems wherever they're faced."

This assessment is the culmination of a journey that began in January 2003, when allegations of sexual assault at the U.S. Air Force Academy came to light. In March 2003, after multiple investigations into these allegations, the secretary and chief of staff implemented *Agenda for Change*. The *Agenda for Change* was a map for complete cultural change within the Academy.

The Air Force learned a great deal about sexual assault from its experiences with the Academy. Consequently, during a four-star summit in the fall of 2003, Air Force senior leaders decided to look beyond the Academy to determine whether the Academy experience was an anomaly or existed Air Force-wide.

This assessment represents the culmination of an 18-month process. Although the learning process continues, the Air Force is comfortable drawing three overarching observations:

- The sexual assault problem is much more complex than it seemed initially.
- Sexual assault is a societal problem. Consequently, it is also an Air Force problem. There are no quick solutions to address sexual assault.

Recognizing and understanding the sexual assault problem is challenging. Air Force commanders have been working this issue on a case-by-case basis rather than attacking it as cultural and societal issue.

Ultimately, the Air Force must work through its commanders to create an institutional environment that refuses to accept or facilitate such behavior.

"It has to do with our core values," Gen. Brady said. "And just as we talk about integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do, there is an important, vital component in each of those that has to do with respect. When we have sexual assault we have a clear lack of respect. As Airmen we must respect ourselves, we must respect the institution and its values, and we must respect each other."



Iceland: Land of Fire and Ice

*By Major Richard E. Bittner
125th Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

The 125th returned to Naval Air Station Keflavik, Iceland this summer to support the Iceland Defense Force (IDF) and the NATO air defense alert mission.

The 125th deployed four F-15s and approximately 110 personnel in three separate rotations mid July through early September. The deployment supported AEF 9/10 commitments.

The IDF has been key in keeping the sea and air lines of communication open between North America and Europe for more than 50 years. The IDF was created in 1951, when, at the request of



Three groups of 125th personnel (pictured in order starting bottom left) deployed to Iceland to support the IDF and NATO air defense alert mission.



NATO, the United States signed an agreement to provide for the defense of Iceland and the North Atlantic.

Today, it provides a dynamic and challenging work environment with the overall responsibility for all military operations in Iceland resting with the IDF commander, a

Navy rear admiral.

There are more than 25 different commands of various sizes attached to IDF.

Approximately 1800 U.S. military personnel, 100 DOD civilians, and 850 Icelandic civilians as well as military members from the Netherlands, Norway, Canada and Denmark work on NAS Keflavik supporting the IDF mission.



125th troops return from overseas, reunite with family and friends

By Tech. Sgt. Julie Fisher
125th Readiness Office

Spring 2004 marked the beginning of several 125th deployments.

It also signified the beginning of numerous friends and families watching the calendar, counting the days until their loved ones returned.

Several groups of Expeditionary Combat Support (ECS) personnel from the 125th deployed to southwest Asia, to support the war on terror. Civil engineers, security forces personnel, contracting specialists, medical specialists, logisticians, pilots and communications personnel deployed overseas, bringing their expertise to support several overseas contingencies.

These troops recently returned from their overseas commitments, and reunited with friends and family.



Photo by Senior Amn. Jaclyn Blackson

SrA James Stevens hugs his wife after returning home from a three month deployment in Iraq on Friday, August 27th at the Jacksonville International Airport.



Photo by Senior Amn. Jaclyn Blackson

DJ Willis waves his flag as he waits for his grandfather, Chief William Hodges, to return with the rest of the 125th Civil Engineers, Friday August 27th at Jacksonville International Airport.

Operation Iraqi Freedom: 125th Engineers return from Balad AB, Iraq

Members of the 125th Civil Engineer Squadron returned to Jacksonville in late August from their deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Approximately 50 civil engineers from the 125th Fighter Wing were deployed to Balad Air Base as part of Air Expeditionary Force 9/10. While deployed, 125th members became part of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Civil Engineer Squadron along with other active duty and reserve members and completed over 2600 work orders and projects.

Civil engineers spent over 90 days in the combat zone working very long hours in extreme

heat and enduring relentless enemy rocket and mortar attacks.

They quickly became familiar with the giant voice announcing,

“Alarm Red. Don your individual protective equipment and seek immediate shelter.”

After hearing an explosion, members quickly donned their body armor if they were not already wearing it.

“It was scary at times, especially when the explosions were very loud and you could feel the ground or building you were in shake, but our training kicked in and we knew what to do and how to react,” said engineering assistant Senior Amn. Katie Anderson.

“We were able to stay focused on the mission,” Anderson added.

After their arrival back in Jacksonville, 125th members were tired but relieved to be home.



A member of the 125th Engineer Squadron works with a cement mixer in the desert in Balad AB, Iraq. Civil engineers spent over 90 days in the combat zone working long hours in extreme heat.



Photo by Master Sgt. Shaun W. Withers

Technical Sgt. Tracey D. Canady, communications specialist, repairs equipment while deployed overseas. The 125th Communications Flight members, who deployed to southwest Asia in June, returned to their friends and families in September.

Most stated that what they were most looking forward to was seeing their families, sleeping in their own beds, eating nonmilitary food, not having to take combat showers, and not worrying about enemy attacks.

However, despite the unpleasant aspects of the deployment, the civil engineers reported that they were happy to have done their part and felt good about the time they spent in Iraq.



An Oklahoma Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook, lifts a 125th power generator and several members (pictured next page) of the FLANG. The aircraft that landed in Pensacola, Fla., Sept. 17 delivered electrical and man 'power' to an armory affected by Hurricane Ivan.



FLANG reports for State Active Duty

Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael D Monlezun, Jr

*By Major Richard E. Bittner
125th Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

Joint effort delivers power to Pensacola Armory for hurricane relief

When Ivan struck the panhandle of Florida with furious winds and rain, hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses were suddenly left without electricity.

Among that number were some of Florida's first responders and in the armory they work in Pensacola, Fla.

A joint operation consisting of airlift from an Oklahoma Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook, a 200 kilowatt generator from the 125th Fighter Wing, Florida Air National Guard and operators from the 202nd Red Horse Civil Engineer Squadron, Florida Air National Guard were called upon to deliver the required power to the armory in need.

PFC Matthew Brinker, ground crew guide, 1st of the 111th Aviation Regiment, marshaled the Chinook to a ramp location in Tallahassee where the CH-47 stopped for gas.

The armory is the headquarters of the 53rd Infantry Brigade and is was used as the Emergency Support Function - 13 (ESF-13 military support) forward operating location. The armory was the headquarters for hub and spoke

military operations for the west Florida tri-county area heavily impacted by Ivan.

The 200K generator, weighing in at 12,000 pounds, once delivered by the joint forces team, had enough juice to be considered a mini power plant, according to Lt. Col. Ron Corey, 125th Fighter Wing Director of Support.

He said the generator would provide more than enough power to restore the armory to full up operations.

"You can't get much more 'joint' than that," remarked Col. Benny Nelson, ESF-13 operations director in the State EOC, when he heard about the personnel and assets assigned to the mission to deliver and operate the generator.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael D Monlezun, Jr



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michelle L. Thomas

Staff Sgt. Lee Pejsa, of the 125th Civil Engineer Squadron, clears debris from a school playground in Indian River, Fla. The engineers helped repair many of the damaged schools on the Treasure Coast affected by Hurricane Frances and Hurricane Jeanne.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shelley Gill

A member of the 125th Fighter Wing unfastens a cargo net from a pallet of Meals Ready to Eat that had just arrived at the Pensacola Regional Airport on a C-130 from the 109th Airlift Wing, New York Air National Guard. The MRE's, along with ice and water were given out at comfort stations to those affected by Hurricane Ivan.



Photo by Senior Airman Thomas Kielbasa.

ABOVE: Staff Sgt. Chris White (left) and Tech. Sgt. Mary Sowerby help distribute ice to victims of Hurricane Frances in Vero Beach, Fla. More than 50 members of the Fighter Wing arrived in southeast Florida to help with the disaster relief. The airmen also helped replace soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, who had returned home to prepare for Hurricane Ivan.

RIGHT: Airmen from the 125th distribute ice, water and MRE's to local residents in Stuart, Fla. after the fourth hurricane, Jeanne, hit in September.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michelle L. Thomas



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michelle L. Thomas

LEFT: Senior Amn. Kizzy Everett, a medical technician with the 125th Fighter Wing, places Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) in the trunk of an Indian River County resident's car in Stuart, Fla



Chief's Words

*Chief Master Sgt. Charles W. Wisniewski
125th Fighter Wing Command Chief*

I traveled to south Florida Sept. 28 with Col. Firth and Lt. Col. Wetzel to visit some of the sites that 125th members were manning for the hurricane relief mission.

I was amazed (but not really surprised) at the attitudes of those who worked in the field handing out provisions to those in need.

Deployed members worked 12 plus hours each day in Florida's renown heat and humidity and slept on cots in libraries or gyms. Even under these uncomfortable conditions, everyone I talked to was upbeat and proud of the work they were doing.

I also had the chance to speak to many locals, police officers, Red Cross volunteers, and county commissioners. They all had the same story to tell. Our 125th people hit the ground running by reorganizing and streamlining the operations.

One county commissioner near the Lake Okeechobee area said that he hoped they would not have to go through another hurricane, but if they did, the first thing he would do would be to request a relief team from the 125th Fighter Wing. He had several different 125th groups work his local relief site over a period of

weeks and he could not say enough good things about how our people came in, took charge and had operations running like a fine Swiss watch. Not only did they get the tasks organized and efficient, they worked nonstop and kept a great attitude through the whole ordeal.

It is always a pleasure for me to do these kinds of visits. Everyone I talked to said the same thing. The 125th Fighter Wing men and women are awesome; the absolute best they have ever seen.

Thanks to all who selflessly left their homes and families to go to the aid of fellow Floridians. They were hurting and in need and what the 125th members did out in the field helped them to make it through a devastating time.

God bless all who serve their country, their state and their fellow man.

To me, and the people helped, you are heroes.

Security Issues

*Staff Sgt. Benjamin Cline
125FW Antiterrorism Coordinator*

In this publication, we often discuss security issues for military members. While it is important we stay informed about these issues, it is just as important we keep our families informed about security concerns as well.

The following are some tips about how to talk with your children about safety issues: Be sure to speak openly. If they feel that you are comfortable discussing the subject matter, they may be more forthcoming to you.

When you speak to your children, do so in a calm, non-threatening manner.

Children do not need to be frightened to get the point across. Practice what you talk about.

You may think your children understand your message, but until they can incorporate it into their daily lives, it may not be clearly understood.

Find opportunities to practice "what if" scenarios.

Don't forget your older children. Children ages 11 to 17 are equally at risk to victimization. At the same time you are giving your older children more freedom, make sure they understand important safety rules as well.

Teach your children that it is more important to get out of a threatening situation, than it is to be polite.

They also need to know that it is okay to tell you what happened, and they won't be a tattletale. Source: www.missingkids.com.

If you have any questions or concerns call your local law enforcement agency and/or Security Forces - Central Security Control (CSC) at 904-741-7861.

Confessions of a Family Programs Coordinator

By Ms. Beth Eifert

FLANG Family Programs Coordinator

Can I trust you with a secret? I mean, we're all friends here, right?

Okay, here goes...I was not prepared for Hurricane Francis (collective gasp). But, for the record, it was all Charley's fault.

Hurricane Charley rebelled against popular opinion and barely caused a breeze in Jacksonville.

So it was for this reason that I found myself at home the blustery evening of Sept. 5, staring wild-eyed at a can of artichoke hearts, a jar of

pimientos, and a serving of Vienna Sausages wondering how in the world I was going to eke out enough meals to feed my family of three (my husband evacuated with the F-15's), our cat, and our pet lizard during what I feared would be a prolonged power outage.

As it turned out, we were spared the worst of it.

So I said a prayer of gratitude to the patron saint of all dried and canned goods, and promised to be better prepared for the next natural disaster.

Little did I realize how soon I'd be tested...

I won't go into all the boring details of my preparedness plan. Let's just say that ravioli now tops our list of gourmet hurricane meals, we have an evacuation plan, and all mammals and reptiles in my household will be well-tended during the next hurricane.

In case you're interested, I got that way by visiting FEMA's website: <http://www.fema.gov/> and urge you to do the same so you will have nothing to confess next time.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) rewards supportive employers

Florida National Guard federal mobilizations, and most recently hurricane state emergency duty for the past two months, have caused a strain on Soldiers, Airmen and respective employers.

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) mission is to help troops and their employers deal with the difficulties of mobilizations and state emergency duty.

ESGR's outreach program offers employers the opportunity four times during the year to participate in a Boss Lift which is paid for by ESGR and takes employers to military sites.

It exposes the employers to their employee-Soldiers and Airmen performing military duty and encourages the employer to sign a statement of support.

Also, ESGR has five awards that a Guardsmen or Reservists can recommend their employers to receive.

The five awards are: My Boss is a Patriot, Seven Seals, "Above and Beyond", Pro Patria, and the Freedom Award.

Guardsmen and Reservists can recommend their employers for the Patriot Award by visiting the website, www.esgr.org. Proceed to the link designated for military members, and then click on the 'quick links' button and a drop down menu will appear. Then, click on *online forms* and a page entitled **Patriot Award** will appear. Complete the form and click on the submit button at the bottom.

If you have the award sent to your home you can either present the award or call the Florida

National Guard ESGR Program Specialist to make arrangements to have an ESGR Committee Rep or a Florida Guard Rep present the award.

If a Guardsman or Reservist wants to recommend his or her employer for one of the four higher level awards, or if he or she has a problem with an employer, contact the ESGR Program Specialist below:

SGM (Ret.) Doug Corbett

Office phone: 904-823-0172

Mobile phone: 904-347-5252

Email: Douglas.corbett@fl.ngb.army.mil



The City of Jacksonville Salutes Florida's Heroes

By Major Richard E. Bittner

125th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Mayor John Peyton, the City of Jacksonville, and the owner and management of the Jacksonville Landing, hosted an event Saturday, August 21, 2004 to honor the soldiers and Airmen of the Florida National Guard for their sacrifices on behalf of our country and our state.

Governor Jeb Bush and Major Gen. Douglas Burnett, the Adjutant General of Florida and a host of other dignitaries, attended the tribute that brought many 125th members and their families out for the day-long celebration.

The tribute ceremony honored the local members of the Florida National Guard for the ongoing contributions and personal sacrifices made by members for the Global War on Terror. The celebration included speeches, entertainment by the award winning Ritz Voices and other local music acts. After the ceremony, members and their families were treated to a free meal of hamburgers and hotdogs. A selection of kid's games, craft booths and static displays were also available for the member's enjoyment in the "Kids Fun Zone".

The day of fun, festivities and food was preceded by a night of free football courtesy of Mr. Wayne Weaver and the Jacksonville Jaguars. Mr. Weaver gave 3000 tickets to local area Guardsmen and their families as the Jaguars kicked off their Pre-season opener at home August 20 as a salute to the Florida National Guard.

The event was a wonderful gesture of thanks on the part of city and the Jaguars and we are truly blessed to live in such a supportive town.



Photo by Ms. Debbie Cox



Photo by Senior Amn. Jaclyn Blackson

Technical Sgt. Paula Milton, and Staff Sgt. Patrick A. Lockett, along with their families, participated in the Jacksonville's Salute to Heroes event on Saturday, Aug. 21 at the Jacksonville Landing.



Photo by Ms. Debbie Cox

Master Sgt. Gary W. Bescrypt (pictured left), 125th Maintenance Sq., stands proud during a Jacksonville Jaguars half-time tribute to the Florida National Guard (Army and Air) at Alltel Stadium Aug. 20. Members of the F125th Base Honor Guard (pictured above) presented the ‘colors’ on the field during the special tribute.



Photo by Ms. Debbie Cox

Governor Jeb Bush was present at the Jacksonville Salute to Heroes event where he thanked the members of the Florida Air and Army National Guard for their contributions to the state and country and recognized families for the support they give the service members. The Salute to Heroes was held at the Jacksonville Landing on Saturday, August 21.

News from HQ

By 2Lt. Kimberly Smith
SEADS Public Affairs

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. - The Florida National Guard hosted a change-of-command ceremony here, Oct. 1 at 3 p.m., for its Air Component.

Brigadier Gen. Joseph G. Balskus, Florida Air National Guard Chief of Staff, succeeds Brig. Gen. Emmett R. "Buddy" Titshaw, Jr., as Commander,

Florida Air National Guard. General Titshaw assumed the position of Deputy Joint Forces Commander - Air and will report to Maj. Gen. Douglas Burnett, The Adjutant General of Florida and overall Commander of the Florida Army and Air National Guard.

Concerning his new command, Brig. Gen. Balskus stated, "I will be taking over the

command of the Florida Air National Guard, a dream come true for me. I am humbled and honored. This position will allow me to continue to implement the changes that Major Gen. Burnett, Brig Gen. Titshaw, and myself have begun."

General Balskus will continue performing his military duties as Chief of Staff, Florida Air National Guard but will also pick up the commander responsibilities.

"Visibly it will not change my position," said General Balskus. "The difference is the Florida Air Guard unit commanders will (now) report directly to me."

Brigadier Gen. Titshaw is now the Deputy Joint Forces Commander - Air, Florida National Guard.

"I will be able to focus on transitioning Florida Air Guard units to new missions," stated Gen. Titshaw.

Additionally, Gen. Titshaw will be a liaison for The Adjutant General of Florida and will work with the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), which is responsible for protection of the airspace over the North American Continent.

Major Gen. Burnett presided over the ceremony and made comments.

"We thank Brig. Gen. Titshaw for the superb leadership and commitment to duty that has taken the Florida Air National Guard to its highest level of success since it's inception in 1947."

"Brigadier Gen. Balskus, you have big shoes to fill but we know you are up to the task," said General Burnett. "You are a proven leader."



Photo by Ms. Debbie Cox

Maj. Gen. Douglas Burnett, Adjutant General of Florida, (right) presents the Florida Air National Guard headquarters flag to Brig. Gen. Joseph G. Balskus symbolizing the change of command of the Florida Air National Guard.

Dental issues take a bite out of readiness

Submitted by Col. Ramsey B. Salem

ANG Assistant to the Air Force Surgeon General for Dental Services

Dental health is vital for health protection and operational mission accomplishment.

Historically, dental emergencies are currently the most common reason for loss of manpower in the wartime theater. Our leadership believes strongly that preventative dental maintenance is the solution.

Dental care in theater for problems that should have been fixed prior to deployment is not the answer. We are now accountable, each and every one of us, for ensuring that the likelihood of our failing to accomplish our wartime task because of dental problems is minimized.

Unacceptable levels of dental health, i.e., Dental Class Three or Four standards, preclude a member from deploying under any circumstances. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Policy Memorandum 98-021 directed Services to ensure all members of the Selected Reserve undergo an annual dental examination (ADE). Unfortunately, many of our members have continued to appear in theater without proper dental exams and with substandard dental health. We have been instructed to fix this problem or face a theater gate, with dental exams, and the instant return home of any member who does not meet the standard.

The dental resources to care for these members do not exist in the theater, and the authorities do not intend to increase dental maintenance resources in theater. Dental readiness is a commander's responsibility. Fitness for duty, including dental health, is a personal responsibility.

The above was taken from SG Log Letter 04-026 dated Sept. 27, 2004.

STARBASE expands young minds

By Greg Stritch

Deputy Director, STARBASE Florida

What a year it's been at STARBASE. In addition to a very busy school year (six schools, 31 classes, 710 scholars!) we had an awesome summer.

Returning graduates attended our STARS II Academy for a math and science tune-up before returning to school in August.

They toured security forces, the fire department, life support, the flight line area and Lt Col Hayden's C-130, to name a few.

In June we had the greatest group of kids ever. **Yours!**

We spent a week with our "base crew" performing goofy science experiments, building rockets, practicing and honing skills on the flight simulators and touring various sections on the base. After an intense year with

our scholars it was such a treat to spend a week with 125th kids.

Also, we've had some big changes this year. In January Nicole Evans joined our teaching staff. Nicole taught at Florida Community College where she was an instructor at the Outdoor Center near Fernandina.

In August our director, Sydney Watson, resigned to join her husband in Freeport, Bahamas. Sydney started our program ten years ago when our classes were held upstairs in the hangar. Colonel (ret)

Frank Kozdras is stepping in as interim director. We are so excited to have his incredible support as we prepare to enter an explosive time of growth.

Thanks again for all the support, all the volunteers, and all the friends at the 125th and for all you do for us to bring value to our program and local area public schools.



Photo by Nicole Evans

Pictured above are just a few of the 710 scholars who met the challenge of STARBASE during the 2003-04 school-year.

In the Spotlight

Senior Master Sgt. Amy Diederich

Diederich, Chief of Airfield Management for the 125th, joined the FLANG seven months ago. As chief, she oversees programs such as airfield checks, flight-line driving, duty desk/scheduling, and Aviation Resource Management.

She started out in the Kansas National Guard 20 years ago in 1984 and joined the Guard for the school benefits and the challenge.

"I have ventured into three different career fields in my 20 years and I have found each career to be rewarding," said Diederich who now resides in the Jacksonville area..

Her new position here at the 125th will present many challenges and rewards. And, according to Diederich, she knew this the moment she interviewed for the position.

"I knew the moment I stepped into the room for the interview that I was among a very special unit. Around the table sat the highest ranking personnel in the Operations arena. I knew at that moment that I was among people of strength and integrity," she said.

"I am very pleased that I was selected for the position and could become an integral part of the 125 Fighter Wing"



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shelley Gill

Senior Master Sgt. Amy Diederich reviews Airfield Operating Instructions in her office at the 159th Fighter Squadron where she works as Airfield Resource Manager and Information Manager.



Photo courtesy of Master Sgt. Daryl Zoller

Thursday, Aug. 12
Master Sgt. Daryl G. Zoller was invited to attend the annual Military Appreciation Luncheon held at the Sea Turtle Inn at Jacksonville Beach, given by the Jacksonville Beaches Chamber of Commerce, directed by Anne Urban of Destination Planning, Inc. and the Beaches Military Liaison Task Force chaired by John Mitchell, Capt, USN Retired. The luncheon honored six top-notch troops from surrounding local military bases. Zoller represented the Florida Air National

Guard. During the luncheon, The Honorable John Peyton, Mayor of Jacksonville shared his great appreciation for the military, local and abroad. Peyton, and Anne Urban, presented a plaque from the Jacksonville Beaches Chamber of Commerce, and a wood engraved box with a pen from the JAX Navy Federal Credit Union as a small token of their appreciation.

Welcomes

Major Stuart A. Batosh, 125LRS
1Lt Johnny V. Johns, 125FW
SSgt Patricia F. Burdon, 125MXS
SSgt Fabian M. Bermudez, 125AGS
SSgt Thomas C. Cowan, 125MXS
SSgt Ryan N. Davis, 125LRS
SSgt Mitchell D. Gainey, 125AGS
SSgt Yasmon R. Green, 125MDG
SSgt Edward R. Hagstrom, 125MXS
SSgt Ryan C. Hill, 125MSG
SSgt Eugene L. Miller II, 125AGS
SSgt Barry J. Simons, 125LRS
SSgt Lance A. Weston, 125AGS
SrA Daniel A. Bengivengo, 125AGS
SrA Ashleigh C. Bolar, 125AGS
SrA Thomas P. Corns, 125MXS
SrA Kevin P. Clark, 125MXS
SrA Kenneth M. Creager, 125MXS
SrA Paul F. Dicesare, 125MXS
SrA Paul A. Farris, 125SFS
SrA Andrew S. Fox, 125MXS
SrA Joshua Gonzalez, 125MXS
SrA Mitchell T. Hamilton, 125MXS
SrA Calvin G. Hardge, 125CES
SrA Stephen C. Ingrando, 125CES
SrA Taquanna L. Lamar, 125MXG
SrA Dustin M. Lapekas, 125AGS
SrA Maryann M. Mayers, 125OG
SrA Karl A. Patz, 125MXS
SrA Matthew A. Taylor, 125AGS
A1C Ashley E. Bellamy, 125MXS

A1C James R. Hardy, 125AGS
A1C Bart W. Henuber, 125LRS
A1C Marcus R. Hinshaw, 125MXS
A1C Adam N. Juchniewicz, 125LRS
A1C Christopher W. Griffin, 125CES
A1C Darryl A. Iannilo, 125MXS
A1C Frank C. Johns, Jr., 125MXS
A1C Norma J. Oldaker, 125AGS
A1C Luis A. Rivera, 125MXG
A1C Charles T. Smith, Jr., 125CES
A1C Charles W. Stroman, 125MXG
A1C Mark A. Wilson, 125MXS

Farewells

Major Jon H. Streich, 125MDG
SMSgt Joel A. Chappell, Jr., 125CF
MSgt Gary W. Bescrypt, 125MXS
MSgt Paul C. Porter, Jr., 125LRS
MSgt Randolph Young, 125AMS
TSgt Harvey L. Dennis, 125SVF
TSgt Henry F. Lutins IV, 125FW
TSgt George W. Roberts, 125MXS
SSgt Robert E. Milanovich, 125LRS
SSgt Lewis L. Taylor, Jr., 125MXS
SSgt Alton M. Tatum, 125LRS

Promotions

To Colonel
Robert M. Branyon, 125MXG
To Major
Dexter V. Davis, 125FW
Kenneth A. Johnson, 125OG
To Chief Master Sgt.
Sharon C. Ervin, 125LRS
Richard F. Larson, 159FS
To Senior Master Sgt.
John R. Crews, 125FW
Amy E. Diederich, 125OSF
John B. Whitten, 125LRS
To Master Sgt.
Clifford F. Archer, 125MDG
Gregory W. Burnette, 125MXG
Timothy M. Clayton, 125MXG
Mitchell Devereaux, 125SFS
Richard A. Morrison, 125SFS
Bobby R. Shuler, 125SFS
Coran L. Williams, 125AMS
To Technical Sgt.
Alfred Adams, 125SVF
Dawn A. Batten, 125LRS
Robert J. Harfman, 125MXS
William Jenkins, III, 125LRS
Brian A. Kemble, 125MXS
Gerald N. Pangelinan, 125LRS
Roger A. Tomlinson, 125LRS
Richard W. Vern, 125MXS
To Staff Sgt.
Tarrel U. Jackson, 125LRS

Jimmie L. Lee, 125LRS
John V. Mortenson, 125MXS
Lee Pejasa, 125CES
Michael H. Robinson, II, 125MSF
Keith A. Rosier, 125CF
To Senior Airman
Ryan W. Schott, 125CES
Richard M. Dickson, 125STFLT

125th member, Flagler County employee thanks those who helped during Florida's busy hurricane season

By Tech. Sgt. Susanne M. Ottlein
125th Mission Support Flight

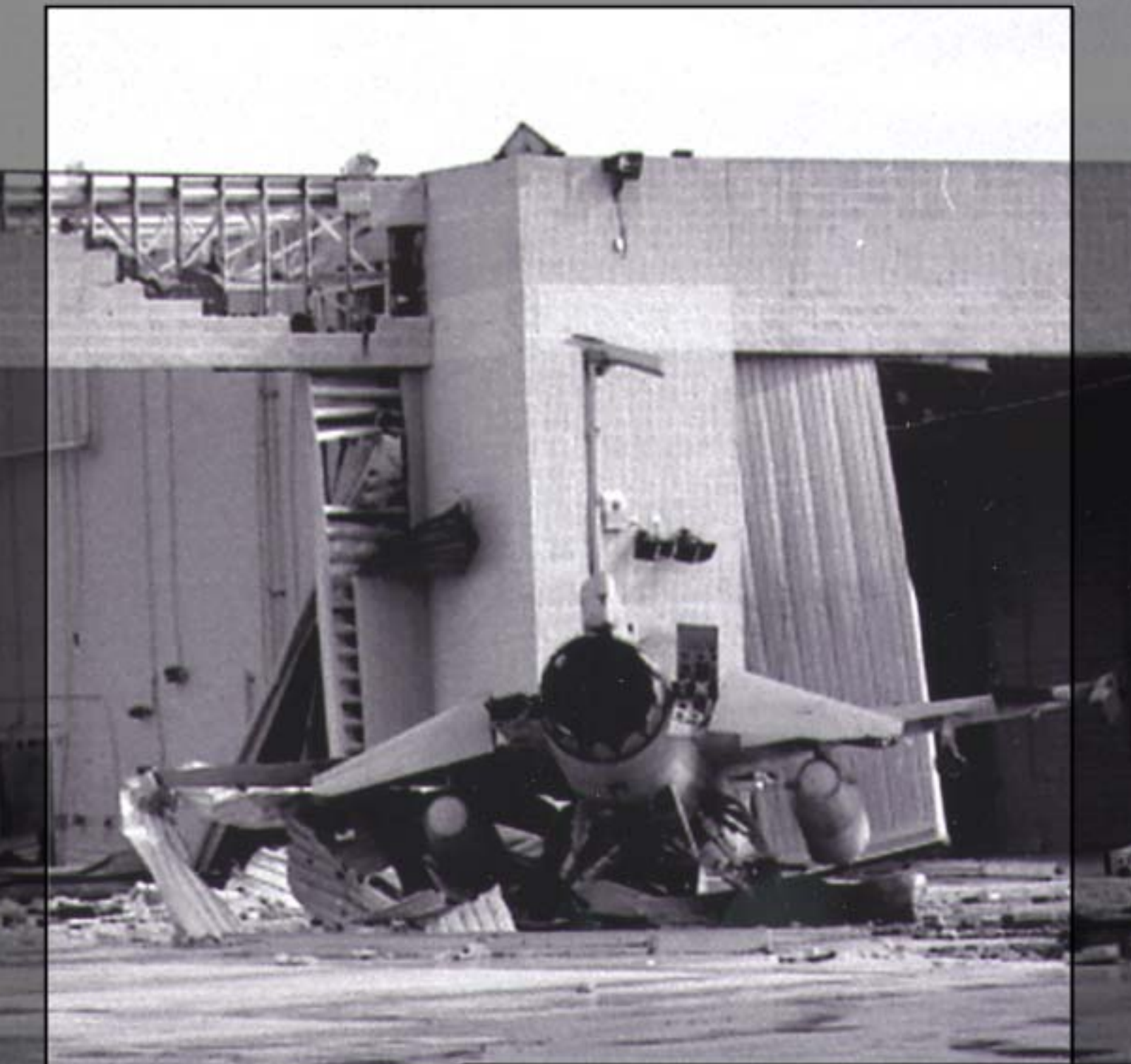
In early September, the Flagler County Department of Emergency Services was preparing for the second hurricane of the season (Hurricane Frances). Well aware that another hurricane had formed off the coast of Africa, emergency services staff members were somewhat fatigued after hours of around the clock operations. About that time, when it seemed as though no relief was in sight, 125th Fighter Wing personnel walked into the Emergency Operations Center and announced they were here to assist.

The day they arrived, I was involved with my civilian job as a staff member of the Flagler County Department of Emergency Services. I was standing in the hallway and I looked up and saw my military counterparts looking sharp and ready for work. It was the first day in weeks that I felt a sense of reprieve to know that we had received the best of the best to assist us.

The team of FLANG professionals assisted in manning and controlling two distribution sites in Flagler County. The two distribution sites were open twelve hours a day seven days a week. The Army and Air National Guard distributed 260,000 pounds of ice, 174,000 liters of water and 69,120 MRE's. Many residents expressed their appreciation for those who distributed the needed supplies since many residents were without electrical service for more than a week.

Flagler County is a small county of 60,000 residents, but it is the fastest growing county in Florida and, even though the county is small, it sustained a substantial amount of damage.

The Flagler County Emergency Services staff, myself, and the residents of Flagler County, thank the FLANG personnel who specifically helped in Flagler county, as well as the countless others who deployed throughout the state. The compassion, concern, and courtesies extended by these professionals contributed greatly to the relief efforts here and in the numerous other counties throughout Florida.



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Florida Air National Guard
125th Fighter Wing (ACC)
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